

# **“Connecting the Community”**

through a public/private initiative

# Key Questions

- Does government have a role in responding to economic downturn?
- What is in the best interest of the City's residents?

# Economic Situation Analysis

- The U.S. is in recession
- Retailers nationally expect consolidation
- Holiday sales projected to be flat (similar to early 90s recession) (Source: Nielsen Wire)
- Environment will only worsen for 'mom and pop' retail/restaurants Q1 2009

# Analysis Continued

- City principle of nurturing “a strong and diverse local economy” (Source: 2002 Comprehensive Master Plan)
- Research demonstrates “business to consumer” sector is feeling most pain
- Impact felt beyond business owners...residents, neighborhoods, tax base, etc.

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# Objectives

- Preserve healthy synergy between Rockville residents and business community
- Facilitate economic health of City; specifically retail/restaurant sectors
- Initiate effort to support and stimulate existing business base
  - Initial focus retail/restaurant; expand to include all 'B-to-C' businesses

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# Guidelines

- A “band together” program, not a “bail-out”
- A community “call to action”, not a costly “ad campaign”
- A “prioritized, measured effort”, not a “shotgun approach”

# 90-Day Plan

## **Goals:**

- Raise awareness of need;
- Build buy-in from residents; and
- Contribute to greater good of community

# 2008 Plan

- Soft Launch of “Buy Rockville” campaign
  - Proclamation
  - Partner with Rockville Chamber; establish “Coalition of Stakeholders”
  - Create web presence to “connect the community”
    - Establish relationship with Rockvilleliving.com
    - “Buy Rockville” web site
      - Retail/Restaurant Database; Calendar of Events; Consumer Survey, etc...
  - Posters/flyers distributed in target areas
  - Event Tie-In: reinforce thematic
  - Continued PR campaign promoting the above

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# 2009 Activities

- Coalition Activities (January-February)
  - Actionable ideas; identify resources; research; campaign coordination/direction, etc.
  - Determine next steps
    - Common purpose?
    - Sense of urgency sufficient for private sector to coalesce and invest in future campaign?
- Implement Plan (throughout recession)